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# REVIEW OF CROSS-SECTORAL CLUSTERS: EDUCATION, SCIENCE AND THE TRANSFER OF ENVIRONMENTALLY SOUND TECHNOLOGY, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO AGENDA 21

## Draft decision submitted by the Chairman

## Transfer of environmentally sound technologies, cooperation and capacity-building

1. The Commission on Sustainable Development takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the transfer of environmentally sound technologies, cooperation and capacity-building (E/CN.17/1996/13 and Add.1), which provided an overview of the policies and initiatives taken and the results achieved in the implementation of the work programme on the transfer of environmentally sound technologies (ESTs) approved by the Commission at its third session.

2. The Commission welcomes the initiatives taken by countries and organizations to organize inter-sessional meetings on specific elements of the work programme, and notes that the above-mentioned report made use of those meetings.

3. The Commission reaffirms the relevance of the work programme, and urges Governments, relevant organizations of the United Nations system, other intergovernmental organizations, the secretariats of the various international conventions, and major groups, particularly business and industry, to further implement the work programme.

4. The Commission recognizes that new and efficient technologies will be essential to increase the capabilities of countries, in particular developing countries, to achieve sustainable development, sustain the world's economy, protect the environment and alleviate poverty.

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5. The Commission also recognizes that the level of technology transfer and technological transformation required to accelerate progress towards cleaner, more efficient systems of production in many developing countries and countries with economies in transition can be realized through financial support and partnership arrangements with donor countries and agencies, as well as with the encouragement of private-sector initiatives and investments.

6. The Commission reaffirms the need for Governments and regional and international bodies to take measures to ensure that women have equal access to and equal opportunity to participate in educational, scientific and technological activities, particularly as participants in and beneficiaries of technology innovation, transfer and diffusion.

7. The Commission urges Governments of developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition to adopt appropriate environmental legislation that will enhance the successful diffusion of ESTs in their own countries. They are also encouraged to develop and implement an appropriate mix of policy measures, including regulations and economic instruments and incentives aimed at stimulating the adoption of cleaner production technologies and improved, more efficient systems of production that emphasize pollution prevention and waste minimization and recycling, with particular attention to the adoption of such systems by small and medium-size enterprises (SMEs).

8. The Commission encourages Governments, the private sector and industry to promote, facilitate and finance, as appropriate, the access to and transfer of ESTs and corresponding know-how, in particular to developing countries, on favourable terms, including on concessional and preferential terms, as mutually agreed, as well as technological cooperation, taking into account the need to protect intellectual property rights as well as the special needs of developing countries for the implementation of Agenda 21.

9. The Commission encourages the greater use of partnership arrangements in and between the private and public sectors, including through voluntary agreements, as a means to achieve commonly agreed environmental goals and objectives and to demonstrate the economic and environmental benefits that can accrue through the application of cleaner production technologies and methods and eco-efficiency concepts.

10. The Commission urges countries, international and business organizations to share information on the use and effectiveness of policy measures adopted by Governments and the private sector to promote, develop or create greater demand for technology and technological innovations aimed at changing methods of production, including improving efficiency in the use of energy and natural resources and in reducing pollution and waste.

11. The Commission urges Governments of developed and developing countries and countries with economies in transition, with the assistance of regional institutions and international organizations, to strengthen the role of technology centres, where necessary, including cleaner production centres and information clearing-houses, as intermediaries and facilitators for the transfer of ESTs, inter alia, to SMEs. In this regard, innovative partnerships between and sharing of experience by and among such centres should be promoted to

increase interaction and to benefit from methods that have proven successful in other contexts.

12. The Commission encourages Governments and national research and technology centres to conduct national technology needs assessment pilot projects in priority areas of development and environment, as appropriate. In identifying priority areas, national environmental action plans or sustainable development strategies, where existing, may be used. Governments may wish to include business associations and other stakeholders in national technology needs assessment exercises. The private sector, in particular, would be in a position to pursue investment opportunities that are generated through national technology needs assessment and to thereby enhance technology cooperation.

13. The Commission calls upon Governments of developing countries and countries with economies in transition to strengthen, with the assistance of donors, where necessary, EST support structures, including technical advisory or consultancy services, marketing support, legal advice, research and development and laboratory facilities and services with the aim of facilitating the successful transfer and development of ESTs. Assistance in project formulation, negotiation and technology sourcing and matchmaking may be needed. In this regard, the private sector could also play an important role.

14. The Commission invites the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) to continue its work to develop an EST information system network so as to increase compatibility and cooperation among information systems and sources related to ESTs, and to keep the Commission informed of its progress. In this context, UNEP is invited to consider developing and maintaining a catalogue of EST-related information systems, and to eventually make such a catalogue publicly available in printed form or on diskette and through global networks, such as the Internet.

15. The Commission takes note of the further development of the International Organization for Standardization standard ISO 14000 and other environmental management standards, such as eco-audit standards and schemes, and invites countries to share information and experiences on the impact of such standards on the demand for and wider application of ESTs and cleaner production methods.

16. The Commission urges Governments to apply, in cooperation with business and industry, appropriate measures that would assist local companies, in particular SMEs, in accessing financial markets to facilitate technological cooperation and technology transfer. In this context, priority may be given to improving the overall availability of finance to SMEs through appropriate measures that stimulate investments.

17. The Commission invites business and industry, including transnational corporations, to take steps aimed at (a) facilitating the access of SMEs to financial markets and ESTs, and (b) promoting capacity-building, in particular in developing countries.

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